

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES DEC. 13 IS 369th BIRTHDAY OF NATIONAL GUARD
Encourages Citizens to Honor Guard Members

RALEIGH – Governor Mike Easley is encouraging all North Carolinians throughout the state to honor members of the National Guard as today, Dec. 13th marks the organization's 369th birthday. Easley also declared Dec. 11-17 as "National Guard Week" to show appreciation and thanks to the members of the oldest arm of the nation's military services.

"Our state and nation are indebted to members of the National Guard for their service and sacrifice," Easley said. "This week and throughout the year, I encourage all North Carolinians to express their gratitude to these volunteer citizen soldiers and airmen and their families."

North Carolina is one of the top three states with the highest percentage of soldiers and airmen who have answered the call to federal active duty since the 2001 terrorist attacks. More than 9,900 North Carolina National Guard members, 7,369 soldiers and 2,539 airmen, have been deployed on federal active duty at home and around the world, and some have been called to duty more than once.

Five soldiers of the North Carolina Army National Guard have been killed in action since 9-11: Spec. Daniel A. Desens, Spec. Jocelyn L. Carrasquillo, Staff Sgt. Michael S. Voss, Capt. Christopher S. Cash and Staff Sgt. Bobby Franklin.

In addition, the Guard has answered the call at home for one of the most destructive storm seasons on record. Hurricane deployment for 2005 totals 1,270 North Carolina soldiers and airmen. Guardsmen responded to Hurricanes Katrina, Wilma, and Rita in the Gulf States and Ophelia on the North Carolina coast. The North Carolina Air National Guard also fought forest fires throughout the southwest with its Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System.

The North Carolina National Guard is a premier Joint Force ready for missions at home and abroad, and is integrated with all federal, state and local agencies and capable of providing plans, policy and ready forces as required.

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